

dressing the Saints would be much more acceptable, and hence I have felt to hold my tongue.

My father, late Patriarch John Smith was the sixth son of Asahel Smith, and was born in New Hampshire. Joseph Smith, the father of the Prophet and second son of Asahel was born in Topsfield, Massachusetts. The second Asahel Smith, the father of Elias who addressed you this forenoon, was the third son of my grandfather.

I merely name this fact because, as br. Kimball and br. Young remarked, so very few of that family have been valiant for the truth. There are but few comparatively of their numerous posterity that have been valiant for the truth.

After the family of Joseph Smith, senior, was destroyed, there were but few left to stand up for the truth of the gospel, of all that numerous family. My father's elder brother was the father of a numerous posterity and was a bitter enemy to the truth, and his descendants remain so to the present time. The only remaining brother of the Prophet, William, has done all that he could do, all that was in his power, I may say, from the time of the Prophet's death to annihilate and destroy the principles which the Prophet taught to the nations of the earth.

My uncle Silas Smith, the fourth son of Asahel, died on his way to Missouri, or rather on his return from there, being driven from that State in 1839, in Pike County, Illinois. He had been in the Church some years and had been faithful.

Asahel Smith, the father of Elias, was a man of an extraordinary retentive memory and possessed a great knowledge of the Bible, so much so that he could read it as well without the book as with it, and after he embraced 'Mormonism' nobody could oppose him successfully, for all their objections were answered from the Bible immediately, giving chapter and verse. He died on his way to the Valley, in the State of Iowa in 1848. He was a Patriarch in the Church and bore a faithful testimony to the truth.

Of my grandfather's family there is but one living, an old lady by the name of Waller, residing in the city of New York, and she is 90 years of age, and remembers all that has transpired during the last eighty years just as well as if it had all just occurred. I visited her when I was last back there, and in talking with me she would speak of things that had transpired many years back as though they had occurred within a year. She is sanguine in relation to the truth of 'Mormonism,' although she has never embraced it, and to use the language of her son, she preaches it all the time.

My grandfather, Asahel Smith, heard of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and he said it was true, for he knew that something would turn up in his family that would revolutionize the world. The news came to us in 1828; we then lived in New York; the four brothers were there, Asahel, Silas, Jesse and John; the old man, my grandfather, living with them.

We received the news that some place had been discovered containing plates of gold. The old man, as I remarked, said that it was true, although his oldest son felt disposed to ridicule it. He lived till the Book of Mormon was brought to him, and died when he had read it about half through, being 87 years of age.

The congregation will excuse me for naming this, but I was so disgusted with the conduct of William, that when I was in the Eastern States I almost took pains to obliterate the fact from the earth that my name was Smith, for I considered it was the worst thing a man could do to endeavor to build himself up on the merits of others, and I feel so yet; and for cousin William to go and endeavor to pull down the work of his brother I feel that he has disgraced the family and the name.

I have never suffered one single exertion to be omitted on my part that would in any way tend to sustain the principles and doctrines of the holy gospel, and aid in the development of the Holy Priesthood which God has revealed. I have endeavored all the time to preserve as perfect a history of the Prophet and those connected with him, from the organization of the Church to the present time, as I possibly could.

The Saints could have carried William upon their shoulders, they could have carried him in their arms, and have done any thing for him if he would have laid aside his follies and wickedness, and have done right. It is like the Latin figure--but I beg your pardon, I never studied Latin, but suffice it to say, the husbandman found a rattlesnake cold and frozen and he took it and he put it in his bosom and kept it there till it was warm and then the snake coiled about the husbandman and destroyed his life.

This was the conduct of William Smith in the days of Joseph and afterwards, up to the present time. The principle that a man should stand upon in this world is simply this; he should do right himself, and thereby set an example to others. But for a man to have good blood in his veins, and then to go and disgrace that blood is perhaps a double responsibility.

If we descended from Abraham, or from Joseph, or from any other virtuous, good, upright man, and we do not emulate his deeds and follow his example the greater will be our shame.

When I was about eleven years old my grandfather received letters containing the news that Joseph the son of uncle Joseph, had discovered, by the revelations of the Almighty, some gold plates, and that these gold plates contained a record of great worth.

It was generally ridiculed and laughed at. A short time after this another letter came, written by Joseph himself, and this letter bore testimony of the wickedness and the fallen condition of the christian world. My father read the letter, and I well remember the remark he made about it. 'Why,' said he, 'he writes like a prophet.'

Some time in August 1830, my uncle Joseph Smith and Don Carlos Smith came some two hundred and fifty miles from where the Prophet was residing in Ontario County, New York, and they brought a Book of Mormon with them. I had never seen them before and I felt astonished at their sayings.

Uncle Joseph and Don Carlos were anxious to get to Stockholm to see grandfather; accordingly they started, and my father went to carry them. I and my mother spent the whole of Saturday, all day Sunday and Sunday night in reading the Book of Mormon, and I believe I read and studied it more than I have ever done since. I studied it attentively and nenned down what I considered to be serious objections. Although I was but thirteen years of age, yet I considered the objections I had discovered to be sufficient to overthrow it.

About five o'clock in the evening the neighbors came in and wanted to see the book. They took hold of the book and some of them were professors of religion, and they began to raise their objections, to find fault with and ridicule the book, and there was no one to defend it, so I thought I would try. I commenced to argue in favor of the book, and answered one objection after another until I came off victoriously and got the compliment of being a very smart boy.

No one brought the objections to the book that I had; mine were geographical objections. I had studied geography a few weeks, but that few weeks' study made me think that I knew a good deal about it.

It is like a man that studies the Hebrew language, he has to drink deep before he can do much with it, and I thought I could confound them. In a few days I saw my uncle and talked with him, and in about half an hour all my learned objections to the Book of Mormon were dispensed with and I found myself in the same position as my neighbors, and from that day to this I have been an advocate of the Book of Mormon, and have never suffered it to be slandered nor spoken against without saying something in its favor, with one exception, and then I said something.

I had been the favorite of my uncle Jesse, and he was a religious man, a 'Covenanter,' and I thought what he did not know was not worth knowing. He came out with all his strength against it, and exerted the most cruel tyranny over his family, prohibited my uncle Joseph from talking in his house, and threatened to hew down with his broad axe any who would dare to preach such nonsense in his presence.

I went to visit him, and he abused me because I had become favorable, and because uncle Joseph had a private conversation with me. I had always treated him with the greatest respect and entertained a very high opinion of him. He was a man of good education and had considerable display, and being the elder of the family he naturally elicited from us more or less respect.

Finally in conversation upon various subjects he turned and talked about that private conversation, and he said, 'Joe dare not talk in my presence,' then says he, 'the devil never shut my mouth.' I replied, perhaps he opened it, uncle. I thought I should have lost my identity; he gave me to the devil instantly. I went and told uncle Asahel what had transpired and the old gentleman laughed, and I then went to see uncle Silas and told him, and he said, 'if old men begin to talk with boys they must take boy's play.' And from that day to the present, if I have said anything, I have said what I have thought.

During the Fall of 1830 a gentleman who lived in our neighborhood went to Western New York and saw the Prophet, got baptized and ordained an Elder, and that was Elder Solomon Humphrey. Very few knew the old gentleman; he died in Missouri in 1835. He was a very faithful man. Previous to joining the Church he was a Baptist exhorter. He came back to our place of residence in company with a man named Wakefield, who is named in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. They came and preached and baptized for the remission of sins.

I had been raised a Presbyterian, and my mother was a very pious woman. The reverend Elijah Lyman, her uncle, who lived in Brookfield, Vermont, was the standard of religion in that country, and he had bestowed upon her the greatest care, that her religion might be of the best kind, and of course I had a great deal of this religion in me, which I had learned from her.

I wanted to know what I should do to be saved, so I went to a Presbyterian revival meeting to get religion, that I might be prepared to join the Latter Day Saints, or 'Mormons,' as they are termed.

At the time, my father was sick with the consumption and given up to die. I had a herd of cattle to take care of, but notwithstanding my numerous duties I went to the protracted meeting and took a load of persons with me; I carried them there and brought them back every day. They had a fashion of religion that I had never heard of, and it was one that was not known in the days of the Apostles, and even John Wesley, nor any of the old reformers had not got such a thing into their heads, that of converting souls by machinery.

The process was like this: all who desired to be prayed for were to take certain seats, and then one of the ministers preached to them and depicted the miseries of hell and the duration of eternity. Then those people were taken to a praying establishment where praying was carried on night and day. Then after a certain time they were brought back and preached to again, the ministers keeping before their eyes the untold miseries of hell and the duration of eternity.

When the ministers got them to feel anxious they would sing with them, and then pray again. When a man by this process was declared to be converted, then he was required to get up and formally renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, and to tell his experience. This was about the process as near as I can recollect. I did not go to the anxious seat myself, for I was not yet under conviction.

During this time of going to the protracted meeting, I had fire wood to cut, my sick father to attend to, and to take care of our stock, but still I endeavored to attend meetings, partly to accommodate my friends and partly because I desired to be present myself. Subject to these circumstances I was under the necessity of return-

ing home every evening, and hence I could not stay as late as many of them.

While at the protracted meeting, however, I had the satisfaction of hearing some of my own comrades who had got converted, formally renounce the world, the flesh and the devil and promise henceforth to be Christians.

In the midst of all this you may depend upon it that if ever a poor soul asked God to show him the way of life I did, and that too with all my might, mind and strength. I could not be a hypocrite, and to say I was afraid of damnation when I had no fear of it at all, that was what I could not do.

I always had the credit of being the greatest coward in the family, and hence the others used to take pleasure in ridiculing what they termed my cowardice. It is also well known that whenever there has been any thing the matter in the shape of Indian difficulties I have had the character of being the greatest coward in the country, especially in the southern part of this Territory, and yet I was not afraid of hell when all its miseries were painted before my eyes, neither would I say that I was under conviction when I was not.

This meeting was a great one and the progress made in converting souls was also great, and they made hell look so terrible to nearly all present that they burnt out and frightened about all the sinners in the place except myself.

At one time they had two hundred sinners under conviction, and such crying, groaning, sighing and lamentation for sins I never heard either before or since; they were so forcible and terrific that they are indelibly written upon my memory.

I soon found myself alone, not a soul except myself but was either converted or awfully on the way. Mr. Cannon, our minister, pointed his finger at me as I sat alone, for there was not a sinner in the gallery except myself, and he said: 'O sinner, I seal you up to eternal damnation, in the name of Jesus Christ!' he repeated it three times over and concluded by saying, 'O sinner, may your blood be upon your own head.'

I went home that evening and scattered my friends about, leaving the girls at their respective homes, for I, like my brethren, am very fond of the ladies, therefore I carried a goodly proportion of them to meeting every day. I thought a good deal upon what I had heard and scarcely knew whether to go again or not, but finally concluded that I would go; therefore the next morning I gathered up my load of passengers and carried them to meeting again.

When on the way to meeting, a young man by the name of Cary asked me where I was going to sit that day. I told him I was not very particular. 'Well,' said he, 'suppose you sit with me.' I said, agreed. I had heard this same young man in a previous meeting formally renounce the world, the flesh and the devil.

When we arrived at the place of meeting, according to agreement I followed him with the intention of sitting with him. I had a decided objection against being driven to heaven, but I found he was actually leading me to the anxious bench and I considered that if the priest the day before who had sealed me up to eternal damnation had any authority it was very little use in my going to the anxious bench.

I did not discover where friend Cary was leading me to till I got near by the minister. He looked at me, when I turned away from the anxious bench and he again walked into the pulpit and pronounced the solemn sealing of eternal damnation upon me, and again appended to it that my blood was to be upon my own head.

On that day the reverend Mr. Williams delivered an address on the untold miseries of hell and the duration of eternity. Whether my mind was then agitated in consequence of the solemn woes pronounced upon me by the other minister, or whether the address was such a very eloquent one I cannot now say, but of all discourses describing hell, eternal damnation, and the complication of miseries to which damned souls were subjected, it seemed to me that his address was the most terrific.

I admired it for its sublimity and the beautiful descriptive powers that were exhibited throughout the whole discourse, and where he got it from I did not know and of course could not tell.

At the conclusion of the meeting I gathered up my passengers, took them home and distributed them about and told them that I had no idea of going any more to the protracted meeting, for, said I, I have been sealed up nine times to eternal damnation, and hence if the priest had any authority it is no use in my going any more; but said I, if he indeed had any he would not act the infernal fool.

[Elder O. Hyde blessed the sacramental cup.] I have no doubt weaved you with so minute a detail of my experience, but it is at least a gratification to me to relate it, and hence I trust you will excuse my being so minute in detail.

A short time after this the Elders of Israel preached in our neighborhood the doctrines of repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, precisely as preached by the Apostle Peter and by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These doctrines I was pleased to hear. I believe them and received them in my heart.

Now you are all aware how I was formally sealed up to eternal damnation. Notwithstanding this, I was waited upon by the agent of the 'Presbyterian Young Man's Society' and told that if I would abandon my father and pledge myself never to become a 'Mormon' they would give me seven years education and then at the expiration of that time I might study divinity and become a minister of the Presbyterian order.

But, said I, Mr. Cannon sealed me up to eternal damnation, and hence it would not do for me to become a minister. He replied, 'O that don't make any difference.'

Well then, said I, if that is all the force your religion and your ministers have, I will not have anything to do with them. Then he concluded they would not require me to preach, but he said they would give me seven years education, and then I might choose what profession I liked.

I told him I was required to honor my father,

and as he was sick I should attend to him at present, however much I might desire an education.

As soon as I got baptized, all the folks in the neighborhood commenced imposing upon me. The idea that they had of a religious man was this; if he would stand still to be spit upon, to be mocked and abused, then he was religious; but if he resented any of these insults, then they considered that he had no religion.

I was very large of my age, but I had not strength in proportion to my size and I was always very clumsy, but finally I told the boys who were imposing upon me that it was part of my religion to fight, and I pulled off my coat and flogged the whole school, and from that day I was respected, so long as I stayed in the neighborhood.

It was with a good deal of reluctance, however, that many of the boys who had previously been able to handle me would yield, for some of them were four or five years older than I was, but in two days it was all finished up and I had peace.

That winter I commenced to study arithmetic. I had previously studied geography, as you have already learned, and during that winter I worked at arithmetic until I got to 'Vulgar Fractions,' but I could not find out what vulgar fractions were, and I don't know yet, and hence I do not think I am entitled to much credit for the proficiency attained in my education.

I always took great pleasure in reading history, both religious and profane, but as to getting an education such as is requisite for a professional man in the world, I did not have the chance, excepting the one before alluded to, and that I did not choose to accept of.

In 1833 I moved to Kirtland with my father and went to work on the Temple, doing whatever I was able to do.

I will here digress from the subject of my experience and remark that I have asked a great many if they could tell who those twenty four Elders were who laid the foundation of that Temple, but I have never yet got the information, and if there are any who can give it, they are smarter than me, and I was there and looked on. If there are any of the brethren who have this information, they should hand it in to the Historian's Office, where it can be preserved in the archives of the church.

It is proper here to say that I went to work at the first principles, and that you know is necessary for every one to do. I went to work at quarrying rock, then hauling rock, tending mason and performing such other work as I was considered capable of doing in my bungling way.

We were a pious people in those days, but notwithstanding our piety, our neighbors soon talked of mobbing us; they had already tarred and feathered the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon and they threatened us with mobbing and expulsion. As I remarked, we were then very pious and we prayed the Lord to kill the mob.

It was but a little time before the Saints were driven out of Jackson county, Missouri, the printing press destroyed, men tarred and feathered, women ravished, and men, women and children scattered to the four winds of heaven, all in consequence of our religion.

Now I am never afraid when I do not think anything is going to hurt me; when I am certain there is no danger then I am not the least afraid. The reason I have been called a coward has been from the fact that whenever I believed there was any danger I have always gone in for providing for it and used my ingenuity to thwart that danger, and hence I have been called a coward by some.

With my brethren who have addressed you I have lain by the side of the Prophet in Kirtland to guard him half of each night for a whole winter, so that if anything occurred I could give notice to all the brethren in a very short time.

I have been by those cross roads that some of the brethren remember, and have seen our enemies pass by so near that I could have knocked them down with a stick. Things were so arranged that if a considerable number came along, I was prepared to communicate it to the brethren. I have had considerable experience, and I have learned that, curious as it may appear, whenever a man becomes a Latter Day Saint the devil wants to kill him.

As I have told you, I was raised in the northern part of New York, a rough country, where, instead of going to get poles to fence with, we used to cut down hemlock trees and split them up into rails.

East is said to be the quarter for light, hence it may be admitted that I have acquired a little. I once strayed as far as Massachusetts, and in a town where there were several Baptist priests, I endeavored to preach the gospel, but they sent their sons into the meeting house, who smoked out the congregation with brimstone, and that is a specimen of what would be poured out upon the Saints by the whole christian world, if they had the opportunity.

In an address delivered some years ago, I spoke of Maryland as a State of liberty, but our reporters made me say Massachusetts, though they are not to blame, for they are raw Englishmen and therefore the fault must have been with the editor.

I said that Massachusetts was the hot bed of superstition and religious intolerance and that Maryland was the first State that by her laws and institutions allowed men to worship God as they pleased.

Whether this mistake was accidental or not I cannot say, but I wish now to correct it, for I do believe Massachusetts to be the very hot bed of superstition and religious intolerance.

In the progress of this church, mobs gathered around us and continued to grow thicker till our history brought us to Far West, where the governor ordered out seventeen thousand troops to exterminate the 'Mormons,' and a great many were marched on to the ground preparatory to being shot by the order of Major Clark.

There are a great many men alive that were there and lived through the operation, and who